

Anne Reinhardt

Cranston resident, Providence teacher

Against bill H-5193

Dear House of Representatives,

I urge you to vote NO on H-5193. I can empathize why some do not understand, or even fear, funding for charter schools. However, ***as an educator and parent I believe everyone has the right to choose the best fitting education for their child.*** While I love many aspects of public education, the simple fact is...***each student learns differently.***

A one size fits all approach does not work.

That's why it's important to ***support innovative schools whenever possible.*** Now, more than ever, we need to support our diverse learners with a wide variety of educational options to keep them ***turned on to learning and prepared for success in an ever changing world.***

I work for such a school- The Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School. This unique high school is ***preparing young people to be nurses and other healthcare professionals.*** I have seen nothing like it in all my years teaching.

Developmentally, teenagers want to know where they fit in the world.

"How do I contribute?"

"Who should I be?"

"How do I navigate my future?"

"What's the point of what I'm learning?"

Too often, if a learning environment doesn't resonate with a teen, they quickly disengage.

RINI offers students an opportunity to participate in a ***rigorous and valuable*** education that prepares them for a rewarding, and much needed field. Where would we be in this pandemic

without our nurses? Our emergency teams? Our administrators? Our nursing home staff? Those distributing tests and vaccines? ***RINI graduates are these professionals.*** While public schools can offer great things, they simply can't offer this highly specialized opportunity.

Not only is RINI producing the workforce of the future, but they are a ***current job creator during difficult times in Rhode Island.*** I lost my dream job as a Director of Special Programs and Visual Arts Teacher to the financial impact COVID had on my school of 8 years. When facing tough decisions around safety and budget, essential arts and afterschool programs were cut. I diligently searched for work only to find that public and private schools barely had any hours to offer the arts and extracurricular programs.

A telltale sign of a great school is one that values the arts as essential to the curriculum. ***RINI was the only school I found that was making plans to expand art and STEAM offerings despite uncertainty... and they welcomed me with enthusiasm.*** Because of RINI I was able to return to work during the pandemic.

A three year pause on charter school expansion means a difficult hurdle to already approved funding for RINI's doubling freshman class, the space to house incoming students, AND the jobs created by the need for more staff. This hurts our student body, it hurts our educators, and it hurts the future of the nursing field.

We are not merely "sucking resources," we are education with a purpose.

As a voter I urge you to vote no on bill H-5193.

Sincerely,

Anne Reinhardt

Cranston Resident

STEAMM Artist Educator, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School

<https://rinimc.org/>